

UTAH LIVESTOCK OWNERS ENCOURAGED TO JOIN THE NATIONAL ANIMAL IDENTIFICA- TION SYSTEM (NAIS)

For Biosecurity Sake

Utah livestock owners are encouraged to help protect animal health by registering their premises as part of the National Animal Identification System (NAIS). The voluntary program is needed to help protect American animal agriculture from the intentional or accidental introduction of a foreign or domestic disease.

"Utah is joining numerous states across the country in the creation of an important tracking system that can speed up the identification and control of any serious animal disease in our state," said Dr. Michael R. Marshall, State Veterinarian. "I encourage owners of cattle, sheep, swine, and other livestock to fill out the Premises Registration Form that is now available and return it to our office," he added.

Dr. Marshall emphasizes that the program will be administered by the same Utah Animal Industry employees that livestock owners have come to know and trust, and that no personal or financial information will be gathered in the Premises Identification process.

Premises Registration Forms are available at the Utah Department of Agriculture and Food (UDAF) (801) 538-7166 or on the Internet at: http://ag.utah.gov/animind/Utah_NAIS.html.

NAIS is a voluntary national program from USDA that is intended to identify all agricultural animals and track them as they come into contact with, or are inter-mixed with, animals other than herd-mates from their premises of origin.

Already, many species in U.S. animal industries can be identified through some sort of identification system, but these systems are not consistent across the country. The NAIS program will eventually replace the sheep identification system that is cur-

rently in use in the United States.

Finding potentially sick or exposed animals early in a disease outbreak is essential to containing or eradicating the disease quickly. The NAIS would allow for rapid tracing of animals in the event of an outbreak, helping to limit the scope and expense of the outbreak and allowing us to minimize impact on domestic and foreign markets.

The UDAF has anticipated the start up of the program and is currently one of only 17 states prepared to issue premises identification numbers. The program is currently operating under a federal grant making the system free to the public. It is uncertain how long such grants will be available to the UDAF and how long the program will remain free to the public.

This news release is one of the UDAF's new "Talking News Releases" where you can hear directly from department newsmakers. Visit Internet site: <http://ag.utah.gov/pressrel/NAIS2004.html>

For more information about the program contact Terry Menlove at: (801) 538-7166.



Sign-up Underway For 2004 Retained Ewe-Lamb Program

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Farm Service Agency has notified the American Sheep Industry Association that sign-up for the 2004 Retained Ewe-Lamb Program is officially underway.

The application period will last only a matter of weeks so producers are encouraged to visit their local FSA office soon. The program eligibility and requirements are essentially the same as last year's program.

UTAH AG NEWS

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UDAF Gypsy Moth Team Reports Two Moths found

Successful Year

Utah Department of Agriculture and Food gypsy moth control teams report finding just two moths this year, marking a successful year of trapping and surveillance. Neither of the moths that were detected were found in an area that underwent special trapping because of their presence last year.

Teams set out dozens of moth traps in the Uintah Mountains of Summit County after detecting two gypsy moths following last year's Rainbow Family gathering. Those traps turned up empty this year, a positive sign that the moth population has not expanded.

The two moths that were caught were found in the Pine Brook area in Parleys Canyon and near the Salt Lake City Cemetery. All other areas of the State have been negative to-date.

Other reporting date show:

- * One gypsy moths caught in Jackson, Wyoming .
- * One gypsy moths caught in Idaho, in the northern panhandle possibly Asian Gypsy Moth.
- * Traps and pheromone have been ordered for 2005 and will be delivered in February next year.
- * Utah crews place over 3,100 traps this year throughout the state.

Safety Report

Over 61,000 miles driven by the crew this year (four vehicles used) without accidents or injuries.

It took more than 300 miles of hiking to place and monitor this year's Gypsy Moth traps without any serious problems. (The equivalent of hiking from Wendover to the Flaming Gorge visitors center)

Special sightings or encounters other than steep trails, thick brush include: being chased by a bull moose, picking off lots of wood ticks, surprising a momma bear with two cubs, spotting a wolf on the East Fork of the Blacks Fork river, and numerous snakes including rattlers.



Standing (L-R) Shirley Pierce, Chris Peterson, Jason Noble, Rhonda Hadley, Steve Deakins, John Williams, Front Row (L-R) Ed Bianco, Kristopher Watson, AnnaLisa Gardiner, Dick Wilson.

Farm groups react to Secty. Veneman resignation

Reacting to Agriculture Secretary Ann Veneman's resignation from the Bush Administration today, Utah Commissioner of Agriculture and Food, Cary G. Peterson, praised her service to American agriculture.

"Secretary Veneman headed the USDA during challenging times, and I applaud her for helping Utah producers through our drought and insect infestation," Peterson said.

The leaders of the National Farmers Union, National Pork Producers Council, National Cattlemen's Beef Association and the National Corn Growers Association and the American Farm Bureau Federation applauded the secretary's service.

"During her tenure, we have faced a variety of complex issues, some of which were crises, and she handled them adeptly," said Bob Stallman, President of the AFBF.

Prior to her announcement, Veneman lauded new agriculture figures that put the net cash farm income for 2004 at \$77.5 billion, about \$9 billion more than 2003 and more than the previous record of \$60.9 billion in 1997. "These could be historical times for American agriculture," Veneman said. "We saw several records established in 2003, including net cash farm income, and as we saw this year unfold I have repeatedly said that we expect the income picture to remain strong.

Charity Food Banks Exempt From Inspection Fee

The UDAF is proposing that charity food banks that distribute packaged food to consumers be exempt from the state's newly created food registration fee program.

The decision to grant the exemption came following public comment from charitable organizations that opposed the fees on non-profit food distribution groups.

"We heard from the public and made the appropriate changes," said Becky Shreeve, UDAF Food Program Supervisor. "We feel good about the exemption," she added.

The department had proposed that a \$30 registration fee be charged to help offset the costs of inspecting the pantries. The exemption affects about 60 locations, resulting in a loss of about \$2,000 to the department. Following a public hearing on the proposal to initiate the registration fee, Shreeve met with representatives from Utahns Against Hunger and the Utah Food Industry.

The following language was unanimously agreed on:

For the purpose of granting registration fee exemptions the following applies: (a) Food establishments that distribute food provisions directly to consumers without monetary consideration exchange will be exempt from food registration fees. (i) These facilities may not conduct any type of food processing and/or reconditioning. (ii) Inspections will be conducted by UDAF to ensure food safety and food establishments will be required to register annually with UDAF.

The exemption, as well as the new registration fee rule, is expected to take effect by the end of the year.